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Aguibou THIAM
Managing Director, SLM
Lambanyi Commune
Conakry, Guinea

Conakry, 2nd of August 2017

Honorable Judge Denise Cote
United States District Court
Southern District of New York
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10007

Re : Mahmoud Thiam

Dear Judge Cote,

My name is Aguibou Thiam. I am a retired civil servant from the ministry of finances of Guinea. I hold a Bachelor in Economics from Gamal Abdel Nasser Polytechnic Institute in Conakry, Guinea. I held various positions in the Guinean administration including Comptroller of the city of Conakry, Deputy Director of Budget and Deputy National Comptroller. I'm am now employed in the private sector.

I have known the defendant Mahmoud Thiam since the youngest age. He left Guinea at age five following his father's arrest. His father was the managing director of the Banque Guinéenne du Commerce Extérieur and perished in the jails of the bloody revolution of Sekou Toure.
I saw him again in 1984, after Sekou Toure's death, when he was a high school student in Brussels, Belgium. I have interacted with and observed him at every stage of his life. We are very closely connected, not only by family ties but by a bond of sincere friendship. He has always relied on my intimate knowledge of our local culture, customs and practices for important decisions. When he was contemplating taking the position of Minister of Mines, he consulted me, but proceeded against my advice, under pressure from others who wanted him to come back and put his experience and address book to use to help a country in dire straights, especially with the international sanctions in effect.

I personally witnessed defendant Mahmoud Thiam take several actions during his tenure as Minister of Mines:

1. He ordered the financial audit of the Guinean Mining Fund which exposed that hundreds of millions of Guinean Francs had been embezzled by previous managing directors. The defendant Mahmoud Thiam then immediately proceeded to ask the Central Bank to stop issuing direct payments to the Mining Fund without prior review and authorization from the ministry of mines. This decision exposed him to the furor of powerful colleague minister and threats of being dismissed. He was summoned at 2 am to the military headquarters of the junta and pressured to revoke his decision.
2. He chose not to collect travel indemnities which he is entitled to as a member of the government, and paid for his own housing. When he left office, his account had a credit of over $300,000.
3. He called me in distress in the middle of the night after he received a phone call carrying death threats from a senior member of the military leadership because he refused to sign an amendment to a contract between Hyperdynamics (an oil company) and the Government of Guinea. In his opinion, this amendment was very detrimental to the interests of the country. His decision was

4. overruled when the senior military commander took advantage of Thiam's absence during a foreign assignment to have the amendment signed by his Chief of Staff.
5. Defendant Thiam helped secure a financial rescue package of close to $100 million when the country was hurting from the devastating impact of international sanctions.
6. He raised money to pay for an audit that determined that the mining Company Russal had defrauded the Guinean Government of more than $2 billion in taxes and remittances.
7. Thiam was instrumental in the donation of over 150 solar panels to our beloved hometown of Dinguiraye, which suffers from systemic power outages and pitch darkness during the dry season.

I could name countless examples of challenges he encountered and managed during these two years. Because President Dadis slept during the day and started his working day at 10 pm into the wee hours of the morning, members of the government had to wait all night for a chance to meet with him and obtain a sign off on their projects. I watched defendant Thiam could go for ten nights in a row without seeing the president and then head to the office to manage the ministry, often having to start a project from scratch because of opposing forces influencing the president orders. I saw his health deteriorate sharply during this period.

Honorable Judge Cote, this is a small description of the man whose fate you will decide shortly. While his mistakes are indeniable, it would be tragic to see all the good actions he has done go to waste be cause of a lapse in judgement. Dear Judge Cote, in light of all this, I beg for your compassion and mercy for Mahmoud Thiam, his three daughters, his wife, his mother in precarious health after more than eight surgeries , his relatives and the entire community of Dinguiraye who has come to rely on his steadfast support.

In the name of our entire community, we humbly ask for your magnanimity and leniency toward defendant Mahmoud Thiam.

With all our gratitude,

Aguibou THIAM

Saada Baila Ly
Retired Mining Executive
Kipe, Centre Emetteur
Conakry, Guinea

July 27, 2017

Honorable Judge Denise Cote
United States District Court
Southern District of New York
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10097

In Re: Mahmoud Thiam

Dear Judge Cote,

My name is Saada Baila Ly. I am a 65 years-old Guinean, married and father of four children. I hold a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering from the Polytechnic Institute of New York, Brooklyn Campus, Class of 1985. I spent my entire 31-year career at CBG (Compagnie des Bauxites de Guinée), a subsidiary of ALCOA and the largest bauxite exporter in Africa, where I worked in various positions from General Foreman, Junior Engineer to the Board of Directors, before retiring in 2011. From 2008 to 2011, I went on leave from CBG when I was appointed by presidential decree to be General Manager of the Guinea National Mining Infrastructure Company (SNIM).

This is when my career path crossed with Mahmoud Thiam, who was appointed in 2009 as Minister of Mines and Geology of Guinea. I knew Mahmoud Thiam before that, because we come from the same hometown and he is related to my spouse. But since Mahmoud Thiam left Guinea at age five to live and study abroad, I did not get to know him personally nor professionally. I just knew he was a successful investment banker in the US. Therefore, my experience with Mahmoud Thiam relates mainly to his role as Minister of Mines. It is during that time that we closely interacted professionally, in my capacity as General Manager of the National Mining Infrastructure Company. In this capacity, I was sitting in the board of several mining companies, such as CBG where Mr. Thiam, as Minister of Mines, was Chairman of the Board.

At the first board meeting he attended after taking office, he was surprised that top positions at CBG were held mainly by expatriate employees and that, in its 40 years of existence CBG had never been managed by a Guinean national. One of key decision he made as Chairman was to instruct the board to conduct a search through a head hunter for a competent Guinean national in Guinea or from the diaspora, to fill the position of General Manager of CBG. The second important decision he made was to reduce operating costs by cutting waste and conflicts of interest in the company and launch a feasibility study to expand the production capacity of the company from 13.5 MTPY (Metric Ton Per Year) to 16.5 MTPY, while meeting the goals of the cost reduction program. By the time Mr. Thiam left his position in 2011, there was a Guinean national appointed as General Manager and the feasibility study for expansion of CBG production capacity was underway.

As Minister of Mines, Mahmoud Thiam had a great vision for the mining industry in Guinea. He launched major industrial projects that were all dormant before his arrival. For example, Rio Tinto had put the Simandou iron ore deposit, for which they had been granted a license to develop for more than 10 years, on freeze. When Mr. THIAM took office, he summoned Rio Tinto's senior management from Australia and ordered them to either show due diligence on the project or relinquish the license in. Favor of more motivated parties. He personally made a trip to the site with his key technical staff members, toured the entire Simandou mountain to review and evaluate the work that had already been performed on the site and demanded from Rio Tinto a firm commitment to a future plan to accelerate the development of the deposit. After he left office, Rio Tinto failed to comply with his requirements and the project fell apart. Rio Tinto subsequently proceeded to renunciate the development of the project.

Mr. Thiam used the same proactive approach with Russal for the Dian Dian bauxite deposit, for which the company had had a license to develop for more than twelve years, yet showed no sign or willingness to invest. Using the same approach he used with Rio Tinto, Mr. Thiam forced Russal to move along on the development of the Dian Dian bauxite mine.

At the same time, Mr. Thiam promoted junior mining companies such as Belzone, Kumba Iron, Alufer and the likes, to quickly start operating revenue generating projects by allowing them more flexibility than the big major mining companies whose silent policy was to secure and accumulate assets for hypothetical future development, but in reality had no interest in immediate investment. In addition, Minister Thiam launched many other initiatives for the development of the mining industry with due regards for the social impact and surrounding communities. For example, he organized meetings between mining companies, local community leaders and administrative authorities at roundtable at the ministry of mines to initiate for the first time a direct dialog to diagnose the problems arising between all stakeholders, foster win win working relationships and develop synergistic solutions.

One of Thiam's most visible accomplishments is indeed the securing of the desperately needed Conakry Express passenger train between Kagbelen in suburban conakry and downtown Conakry (36 KM). This train service, a first of its kind in Guinea, allowed hundreds of thousands of Guineans to get to work every day without being subjected to hours long of horrendous traffic jam that plagues Conakry.

It is during this time spend working with Mahmoud Thiam that I got to know him personally and professionally. He is calm, practical, DECISIVE AND HARD WORKING. During his tenure as Minister of Mines, Mr. Thiam was courageous, proactive and diligent in tackling and solving the difficult issues that were preventing the emergence of a viable and vibrant mining sector in Guinea.

The news of Mahmoud Thiam current entanglement with American judiciary system left me speechless. The accusation and conviction for money laundering shocked me because it so at variance with what I know of Mahmoud Thiam, having closely worked with him for two years and seen his achievements in such a short period of time in an extremely difficult political and institutional environment.

In addition to his moral character, this talented young man is smart, dedicated to his work, his colleagues, his community and always ready to help young people in need. I witnessed his action to help many young boys and girls from the lowest income families get scholarships to pursue a Bachelor Degree in Malaysia.

I also saw him launch and help finance a Non Governmental Organization to help his hometown fight climate change problems and environmental issues stemming from increasing desertification.

It is clear that the context in which Mahmoud came to serve Guinea was difficult. He was in an environment he was not used to dealing with and part of a military and authoritarian government where he didn't always have full latitude in the course of actions he had to take.

The reason why I am writing to you, dear Judge Cote, is to share with you a completely different perspective on the defendant Mahmoud Thiam and to ask you as much as that can be possible for leniency in the case of Mahmoud Thiam. Because he is young, talented and with a proven competence that can be extremely useful to this country were many see him as a potential leader, capable and with a great vision for the economic development of Guinea and the region.

A prison sentence will deprive us of this great opportunity, will ruin the live of this young and successful professional and leave his wife and daughters devastated and with immense psychological consequences.

For all these reasons, dear Judge Cote, I beg for your leniency towards Mahmoud Thiam.

Faithfully yours

Saada Baila LY

Retired Mining Executive

Kipe, Centre Emetteur

Conakry, Guinea

Baila Consulting

Dakar, July 26 2017

United States District Court
Southern District of New York
Honorable Judge Denise Cote
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10007

RE: Mahmoud Thiam

Dear Juge Cote,

My name is Bokar LY. I am 63 years-old and I hold an Advanced Management Degree (AMP) from Harvard University. I am an international business consultant based in Dakar, Senegal, after running one of the largest mining companies in West Africa for more than twenty years.
I am related to Mahmoud Thiam by blood, history and geography. We are cousins and we are all from the same Sahel hometown of Guinea called Dinguiraye, which was founded by our ancestor in the nineteenth century.

I do not know much of the case for which Mahmoud Thiam is being detained. I did not have the opportunity to see him while he was working as a minister in Guinea. Yet, the story of Mahmoud Thiam's life, his father's, mine and that of many other Guineans who, like him assumed professional responsibilities, forces me to implore your leniency for this young man who is an example of success and hope for thousands of Africans.

His easy demeanor, his intelligence and his generosity, his culture and his eloquence make us all believe in this man with a unique destiny. A unique destiny because Mahmoud Thiam is the son of a great banker who was cut off from our affection by a barbaric and dictatorial regime that brutalized Guinea from 1958 to 1984 and exterminated more than 50,000 people, among them Mahmoud's father, when he was only 4 or 5 years old. It's this very young orphan who did not have

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the good fortune to know his father, and whose mother, a nurse, was forced into exile in a remote rural area, who is today incarcerated for money laundering.

I would not even dare to discuss the details of the case. However, I would like to humbly point out that, while he was acting as minister in Guinea, a country he left when he was five, the country was under a "Regime d'Etat d'Exception" following a military coup d'état immediately after the death of the president, himself a military man who ruled dictatorially for more than 25 years on the back of a previous dictatorship that murdered Mahmoud's father. It is thus in a country without a State, where governmental actions had no public policy basis, let alone legal basis, that Thiam was called to put his expertise and competence at the service of the nation.

My experience in the mining sector allows me to qualify Mahmoud Thiam as the best Minister of Mines of Guinea in the last twenty years. Unfortunately, he stumbled upon his poor understanding of the country, its people and practices, just as I did twenty years ago before him and was forced into exile.

Honorable Judge Cote, in the name of Mahmoud Thiam's family, I implore you on my knees to consider all this and give this father, beacon of hope for thousands of young Africans, a second chance.

Respectfully yours and God Bless,

Bokar B. LY

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To Honorable judge Denise Cote United States District Court Southern District of New York 500 Pearl Street New York, NY 10007

Le Perray-en-Yvelines, on July 26th 2017

Subject : **Mahmoud Thiam case**

Dear Juge Cote,

My name is Aissatou Traore. I am 31 years old. I am an Electrical Engineer and work as a Project Manager for Renault in Guyancourt, France.

Mahmoud Thiam is my brother. Our mom, Fadima Thiam, was separated very early from her two older children, which are my older brother Mahmoud Thiam and my older sister Fatoumata Thiam.

Our mom was a 25- year old young woman when her husband was arrested in 1971 by the Guinean dictatorial regime. He never came back home.

I was born 15 years later when my mother remarried. I did not have the chance to grow up with my brother Mahmoud Thiam, but I am convinced that he is an honorable man because he always brought assistance to his relatives. He is a man who has a lot of empathy.

The charge and the conviction of Mahmoud Thiam for money laundering were a big shock for me and for all our family. This whole affair is a tragedy for us. The consequences of a prolonged imprisonment will have a catastrophic impact on the lives of his three daughters and his wife that have been waiting for him for months. Since the arrest of my brother, our mom, who is in very fragile health, is letting herself die slowly.

Your Honor, I humbly implore your leniency for my brother, Mahmoud Thiam.

Yours faithfully

Aissatou Traore

Mamadou Ly
Harbin. China

July 25. 2017

Honorable Judge Denise Cote
United States District Court
Souther District of New York
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10097

In Re: Mahmoud Thiam

Dear Judge Cote:

My name is Mamadou Ly. I am a 27 years-old Guinean. I hold a Bachelor Degree in International Business Management from Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation, Malaysia 2005. I am now a fresh Masters Degree graduate from Harbin Institute of Technology, China.

I have known the defendant Mr. Mahmoud Thiam for almost 7 years. I heard about him from one of my uncles who told me about his generous initiative, which was to help underprivileged students from Guinea to get a scholarship to study in Malaysia. One of prerequisites for obtaining the scholarship, besides academic excellence, was to pass an English proficiency test and to be from an underprivileged family. With the grace of God and my willingness to workhard, I was able to successfully pass. Out of almost 100 students from underprivileged background who took this test and only 20 were selected. However, the scholarship did not cover my flight ticket to Kuala Lumpur, and due to my family poor financial situation, I could not afford it. Mr. Mahmoud did not hesitate to buy my flight ticket.

In 2012 I went to Malaysia and studied formy bachelor degree under the sponsorship of the Malaysian Yayasan Albukhary Foundation. I graduated in 2015 and came back to my country, Guinea. Studying in Malaysia helped me to become fluent in English and to acquire a good business knowledge. That same year, I got another scholarship opportunity to pursue aMasters Degree in China. Two years later, I graduated with a Masters Degree in Management Science and Engineering. I believe that, if not because of the generosity and help I got from Mr. Mahmoud, I would not be here today. Mr. Mahmoud's support for my education has brought me many opportunities.

I was not aware of his criminal conviction until recently and I was shocked by the charge and conviction because it is so at variance with my knowledge of uncle Mahmoud's character and way of life. Hearing this sad situation would not leave me indifferent because I know him personally and he is not this type of person.

If I have to describe Mr. Mahmoud's good character, it wouldn't come to an end because he is an exceptional person with a good and clean heart. He is a sincere person who is honest in his feelings. He is a generous person who share shares what he has willingly. He is a frank person who says and does things like he thinks. He is a compassionate person who can feel what other people feel. He is amiable and affectionate. He is a family oriented person and his love for his family and friends is enormous. Mr. Mahmoud's philanthropic endeavors through helped me and many other young Guineans study for our Bachelors Degrees in Malaysia

Mr. Mahmoud would like to move forward with his life. Sending him to jail would prevent him from attaining his goal to help many brilliant underprivileged students like me to become future leaders and intellectuals of Guinea. Keeping him in jail would be devastating for his family, our community and this country. I personally need him to be around, because he is one thegreatest role models I know of a generous, honest, capable and great person.

Respectfully yours,

Mamadou Ly

Ly Amadou Nalla
Retired Journalist
Conakry, Guinea

July 25, 2017

Honorable Judge Denise Cote
United States District Court
Southern District of New York
500 Pearl Street
New York, NY 10097

In Re : Mahmoud Thiam

Dear Judge Cote :

I am honored to write to you in spite of the exceptionally difficult circumstances for us and our entire community who is severely impacted by them. I am referring specifically to the arrest of one of our sons, who is not only dear to us but is also a critical resource for our community. Mahmoud Thiam distinguishes himself by his attachment to his family and our region, which he always sought to help and serve.

When he arrived in Guinea in 2009, despite the high function he held as Minister of Mines, he remained accessible to people, kept his door always open for advice, recommendations and strategies for the development of the District of Dinguiraye, which was so dear to his heart.

This why one day, he convened a meeting to set up a NGO for the development of the District of Dinguiraye, focusing on mining, the environment, but also social and economic issues. He confided in us that he was pained to see Dinguiraye, our native hometown and that of his parents, suffer from lack of drinkable water, but most importantly from threats of droughts due to the severe deterioration of its environment and the abusive logging practices, a situation he found unacceptable and unbearable.

Thus in 2010, he invited 16 of us to meet at his home to explain his plan to start an association with the objective of promoting economic and social activities, but more importantly to proceed with reforestation initiatives to start restoring the vegetation layer, boost agriculture and reduce the constant threats of famine. He suggested to name the association « Dinguiraye Vision 2020 ». His financial contribution for this action was critical. In addition, he was very instrumental in helping us obtain the governmental authorization necessary, dated October 18 2010, after required statutes, rules and regulations were issued . His original support was then supplemented by other family members contributions which helped launch the NGO.

It is thanks to Mahmoud Thiam's initiative that the association « Dinguiraye Vision 2020 » was born and this project is fully invested to benefit our community.

Dear Judge Cote, we want to bring to your attention these revealing facts of the value of this man who deserves your high benevolence. Mr. Thiam showed proof of his love and attachement to his family and this community he always sought to serve.

We appeal to your magnanimity, dear Judge Cote, to grant our dearest son and nephew another chance to serve again this country and his community.

Ly Amadou Nalla